

Copper History Panels: Grand Reading Room

A Story of Nashville

Gregory Ridley | Hammered Copper (Repoussé)

Inside the Grand Reading Room, a series of 80 hammered copper repoussé (frieze) panels, integrated within the tops of the bookshelves, forms a linear story of Nashville's history from its pre-settlement period to present day. The panels begin to the right of the main entrance and continue counterclockwise around the room.

Alcove 1: Prehistory and the native Indians

1. Animals (Bear, Elk, Buffalo)
2. Feast & Hunters (Mississippian Culture c. 900-1600)
3. Native Americans (Cherokee & Chickasaw)
4. Native Americans Early Stages
5. Landscape (River, Moon)

Alcove 2: Early Settlement of Tennessee

6. Long Hunters / Fur Traders (1760s)
7. Robertson's Party Coming Over Land (1779)
8. Robertson's Party Crossing on Foot
9. River Crossing / Flatboats (1780)
10. Battle of the Bluffs (1781)

Alcove 3: Becoming a Town

11. Native American Portraits
12. Robert Renfroe
13. Great Awakening
14. Racing 1st Thoroughbred Stallion (1800)
15. Andrew / Gen. Jackson (1788)

Alcove 4: Andrew Jackson: Local Hero

16. 7th President Andrew Jackson (1828 – 1836)
17. Lafayette's Visit (1825)
18. "Old Hickory" (War of 1812 Nickname)
19. Jackson / Hermitage
20. Andrew (1767 – 1845) & Rachel (1767 – 1828) Jackson

Alcove 5: Agriculture, Industry, and Transportation

21. Farm Scene – Working in Field
22. View of Nashville - Carriage
23. Trail of Tears (1838)
24. Activity on Riverfront (1st Steamboat, 1819)
25. Stone Bridge

Alcove 6: Antebellum Tennessee

26. 11th President James K. Polk – Election (1845)
27. Architect William Strickland - Portrait
28. University of Nashville (1825)
29. Antebellum Houses
30. Coming of the Railroad (1831)

Alcove 7: The Civil War

31. Confederate Soldier, Civil War (1861 – 1865)
32. State Capitol Grounds
33. Fort Negley
34. Battle of Nashville (December, 1864)
35. Union Soldier

Alcove 8: Andrew Johnson and Reconstruction

36. 17th President Andrew Johnson
37. Jubilee Singers (1871)
38. Historic Churches
39. Vanderbilt University (1872)
40. Cattle Sale – Belle Meade

Alcove 9: The Rise of Nashville

41. Warehouses Lining the Cumberland
42. Baseball in Nashville (1885)
43. Sunday Afternoon in the Park
44. Maxwell House Hotel (1869)
45. Ryman – Religion / Music (1892)

Alcove 10: Tennessee Centennial

46. Centennial Exposition (1897)
47. Centennial Exposition - Fireworks
48. Parthenon
49. Daniel Boone – Statue Centennial Exposition
50. Centennial Exposition – Carriage Parade

Alcove 11: Turn of the Century Nashville

51. Union Station (1900)
52. Arcade (1903)
53. African American Business Quarter (5th & Charlotte)
54. Transportation – Marathon Motors (1910)
55. Gerst Brewery (1890), Stockyard (1919)

Alcove 12: Nashville in the 1910s

56. Social Service Agencies
57. East Nashville Fire (1916)
58. Red Cross Volunteers
59. WWI Soldiers
60. DuPont Powder Plant (1918)

Alcove 13: Nashville in the 1920s and 1930s

61. Women's Suffrage (1920)
62. War Memorial (1925)
63. Inter-Urban Railroad (1908 – 1948)
64. Opry (1943 – 1974)
65. Depression

Alcove 14: Building the Modern City

66. Courthouse (1937), Post Office (1934)
67. Schools
68. Harlem Renaissance
69. Berry Field – New Airport (1934)
70. Frozen River (1940)

Alcove 15: Nashville in the 1940s and 1950s

71. Captain Jack Barnes, Clees Ferry
72. WWII Service Men
73. Cornelia Fort (1919 – 1943) – Women in the War
74. Shopping on Church Street
75. Sit-Ins (1959 – 1960)

Alcove 16: Nashville Today

76. Suburban Growth in Neighborhoods
77. Olympic Gold Medal Winners (Tigerbelles, Boston, Cullbers)
78. Metropolitan Government
79. Nashville Skyline
80. Back to the River